

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 02482 051310Z
ACTION ARA-14

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INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV PINT SHUM CI
SUBJECT: CURFEW RELAXATION EXTENDED TO WHOLE COUNTRY

REF: SANTIAGO 2401 (NOTAL)

1. ON MARCH 28 THE MILITARY GOVERNORS IN THE 10TH, 11TH AND 12TH REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY (FAR SOUTH) DECREED THAT THE CURFEW NO LONGER APPLIES TO PEDESTRIAN OR NON-MOTORIZED MOVEMENT. A SIMILAR RELAXATION BECAME EFFECTIVE IN THE GREATER SANTIAGO AREA MARCH 31 (REFTEL). ON APRIL 3 THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE (GOC) ANNOUNCED THAT THE CHANGE IS EFFECTIVE FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. HOWEVER, THERE REMAINS SOME DOUBT ABOUT THE VALPARAISO PROVINCE WHICH HAS ALWAYS HAD CURFEW REGULATIONS SOMEWHAT AT VARIANCE FROM THOSE ELSEWHERE.

2. THE MOST RECENT CURFEW ANNOUNCEMENT APPEARED IN AN INTERIOR MINISTRY CIRCULAR AND INCORPORATED THE INSTRUCTIONS CARRIED IN TWO GOC "BANDOS" PUBLISHED APRIL 1. THESE "BANDOS" STATED THAT THEATERS AND MOVIE HOUSES SHOULD TERMINATE THEIR FUNCTIONS BY 2400 HOURS, WHILE ADVISING RESTAURANTS AND NIGHTCLUBS TO CLOSE DOWN BY
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0100 HOURS. A CHECK WITH GOC AUTHORITIES SHOWED THAT CHILEANS AND THE NON-DIPLOMATIC FOREIGN COMMUNITY ARE STILL SUBJECT TO A FINE IF DETAINED WHILE DRIVING DURING THE HOURS OF CURFEW. DIPLOMATS ARE URGED TO SECURE A SAFE-CONDUCT PASS TO DRIVE DURING CURFEW. THE GOVERNMENT CITES A REIGNING "ATMOSPHERE OF TRANQUILITY AND NORMALITY" AS JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CURFEW RELAXATION, WHILE DECLARING

THAT THE MEASURE IS CONSISTENT WITH ITS ECONOMIC POLICY,
ESPECIALLY IN REGARDS TO FUEL AND ENERGY SAVINGS.

3. COMMENT: THE CURFEW RELAXATION REFLECTS GROWING
PRESSURES ON AND WITHIN THE JUNTA TO ACCELERATE THE IN-
STITUTIONALITY TIMETABLE AND TO RETURN THE COUNTRY TO
NORMALITY. GENERAL LEIGH FOR ONE HAS ARGUED THAT CON-
DITIONS ARE SUCH THAT THE CURFEW COULD BE LIFTED WITHOUT
SACRIFICING INTERNAL SECURITY, THAT THE ONLY ONES WHO
SUPPORT THE CURFEW ARE WIVES AND MOTHERS WHO WANT THEIR
LOVED ONES TO GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP. NOT SURPRISINGLY,
THE FIRST REGION TO EASE THE CURFEW -- THE TENTH -- IS
GOVERNED BY AN AIR FORCE OFFICER. ALTHOUGH THE CURFEW
CHANGE IS IN THE DIRECTION OF RELAXATION, IT APPEARS
THAT ONE SIDE-EFFECT MAY BE THE LOSS OF AN HOUR OF
COMPLETE FREEDOM FOR ALL KINDS OF MOVEMENT. WHEREAS
PREVIOUSLY IN SANTIAGO, MOTORIZED TRAFFIC HAS BEEN AL-
LOWED UNTIL 3 A.M. SUNDAY MORNING, THE NEW REGULATIONS
WERE BEING INTERPRETED APRIL 2 AS REQUIRING VEHICLES
OFF THE STREET BY 2 A.M. SUNDAY -- I.E. THE SAME AS ALL
OTHER NIGHTS OF THE WEEK.

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